MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Question No. 163.

DR.K. MALAISAMY: I have been repeatedly asking you but you do not look at me. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Only one question, please. ...*(Interruptions)*... Shri Jai Prakash Aggarwal. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: May I answer this, Sir? ...*(Interruptions)*... If you permit me...*(Interruptions)*...

Unwanted tele-marketing calls

*163. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether TRAI has put in place norms to ensure that tele-marketeers do not disturb phone users;

(b) to what extent the National Do Not Call (NDNC) Registry would help poorer sections to get access to it and ensure that they are not disturbed;

(c) whether it is a fact that poorer people would not be able to properly avail of the 'National Registry';

(d) the steps proposed to evolve a Registry with a positive list of subscribers who welcome telemarketing; and

(e) the steps to protect people from unwanted SMS messages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. TRAI has issued regulation on Unsolicited Commercial Communication on 5th June, 2007.

(b) and (c) NDNC Registry has been put in place to register requests of mobile subscribers who does not want to be disturbed by tele-marketing calls. This registry does not discriminate between poor and rich. Any mobile subscriber can request his/her own service provider to get his number included in NDNC registry. This facility is free of cost for the subscribers.

(d) There is no proposal to evolve a registry with a positive list of subscriber who welcome tele-marketing calls.

(e) The scheme of NDNC registry is applicable for unwanted tele-marketing SMS messages also.

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India had been set up to regulate the telecom companies. But it seems that the main job of TRAI is only to help private telecom companies. I have never seen an action taken by TRAI whereby it protects the public. Unless there is a lot of media out cry, the TRAI never acts to protect the public. It is not only in the matter of tele-marketing that TRAI is not doing its job but also in the matter of price of phone calls whereby the prices of SMS and every other subject, TRAI never does anything to protect the interest of the public. My first supplementary is whether the Government will make the Registry different so that all tele-marketing is banned unless the subscriber registers for tele-marketing. How will the TRAI make sure that the public is not harassed just to enable telecom companies to make more money and how would poor people be protected who are disturbed constantly by unwanted phone calls?

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD: Sir, this question is relating to unsolicited tele-marketing calls. The TRAI has issued a Notification dated 5th June, 2007. The Department of Telecom has directed all the telecom operators to register tele-marketeers and also asked the NIC of the IT Department to prepare software and make a Registry. Every telemarketeer should register first with that Registry and then a telephone subscriber can call has or her service provider to register himself or herself with the Registry by saying that he does not want to receive any unsolicited tele-marketing calls. If the telemarketeer makes a call to that number, then he will be charged Rs. 500 per call. So, the TRAI is doing its best for the development of telecom sector. Sir, TRAI, as a regulator, is doing its job. I, on behalf of the Telecom Ministry, can say with confidence that the TRAI is doing its work satisfactorily.

SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Sir, part (a) of my second supplementary is this What steps will the Government take to make the TRAI pro-active and regulate the telecom companies? The telecom companies are financial giants and everyone is afraid of them. So, what steps will the Government take to appoint strong and independent Members in TRAI?

Part (b) is: Instead of having a Do-Not-Call-Registry, which is friendly to telecom companies, what must have been arranged by the Government is to have a Permitted-Call-Registry. Sir, Do-Not-Call- Registry will only help the telecom companies. We must remember that in the recent New Seven Wonders of the World contest only the telecom companies have gained millions of dollars. Is it not true? The hon. Minister may give a reply.

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD: Sir, the TRAI has issued an advertisement in almost all the major newspapers of the country asking tele-marketeers to register themselves by 31st August, 2007. Otherwise, their telephones will be disconnected if they make any tele-marketing calls. Most likely, from 5th September, 2007, there

will be a Registry for subscribers to register himself or herself with his or her telecom operator and register the name and number by saying that they do not want to receive any unsolicited tele-marketing calls. So, Sir, TRAI has taken the lead in it. Of course, we have received complaints from the subscribers and that is why the TRAI and the Government, in tandem, are doing this work.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: I wish the hon. Chairman generous to me every time.

Sir, when a facility is given to avoid any disturbance, it is most welcome. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether such facilities and services are really reaching the subscriber, particularly when the norms warrant that your services should be timely, equal, continuous and adequate. These are the norms under which you are functioning. But the general complaint is that it does not reach the subscriber at all. If that is the case, what are the measures take by the Department? And, whether such measures are adequate and effective?

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD: Sir, as I said in my reply, this facility will start most likely from 5th September, 2007. The TRAI has asked all the tele-marketeers to register themselves by 31st August, 2007. So, even after that, as I said earlier, if a telemarketeer calls somebody who is registered himself or herself with the NDNC Registry, then, that telemarketeer will be charged a tariff of Rs. 500 per call. By doing these types ot things, the Department, in collaboration with the TRAI, is trying to get rid of unsolicited calls received by common subscriber from tele-marketeers. Sir, SMS is also included in this.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Sir, sometimes when we get calls from tele-marketeers full numbers are not displayed, only four or five digits are displayed. Further, when we attend to the call, we hear the recorded computerised voices. This happens when we are on roaming also. Thus, we are compelled to pay for those services that we don't require, that we don't solicit for. Will the Ministry take into consideration deducting those calls and instead charge for them from those companies which make unsolicited calls?

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD: Yes, Sir. The entire motive of the Department and the TRAI is to save the telephone subscribers from the unsolicited telemarketing calls. This is the first step we are taking. As soon as we will be able to do this and if other things emerge and the Department feels technically that we need something extra to do, the Government will do everything on its part to give concessions and to redress the grievances of the subscribers as soon as possible.

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any timeframe prescribed that the mobile number which do not receive any telemarketing calls has to be there on NDNC registry. If yes, what is the period of mandated time that the mobile numbers have to be there on the registry? I would also like to know whether it is true that NDNC registry is only for personal phone numbers and business-to-business calls are not covered by the registry. Also, how long the personal phone numbers will remain on the registry?

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD: Sir, once a subscriber registers himself or herself with the NDNC registry, it will be valid for ten years. As far as business-to-business calls are concerned, any telephone user, if he or she registers himself or herself with the NDNC registry, that particular phone number will be in the registry, and if any tele-marketeer phone to that number from any number, then, they will be charged as per the tariff. I have already mentioned.

Construction of houses under JNNURM

*164 . MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:††
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Centre has sanctioned Rs. 361 crores to Rajasthan under the JNNURM for construction of 20,000 new houses to replace the slums in seven towns in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that Orissa is among the most backward and poverty-stricken region;

(d) if so, whether such a project is also proposed to sanctioned for Orissa State to replace the slums; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (KUMARI SELJA): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Centre has sanctioned 22 projects with total project cost of Rs. 426.23 crores in Rajasthan under Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) and Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). This, includes cost of new construction/upgradation of 28,232 houses for urban poor as also cost of related infrastructure. The details of the projects approved under BSUP and THSDP are annexed as Statement I and II (*See* below).

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. The projects under JNNURM are demand driven. No project proposal has been received from the State of Orissa under JNNURM.

†† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Ms. Pramila Bohidar.